5: Tao E-5 (1926-1927) 1928 AF12 North China AF12

CHAPTER VII

HOUSING AND HOUSEHOLD EQUIPMENT AND CLOTHING

362 House rent is an important item of expenditure with our Peking families. In the order of percentages, it comes only after food and fuel and light. On account of its importance, we will give separate treatment to the housing conditions of the forty-eight families under investigation.

HOUSING CONDITIONS

361 For some five centuries, Peking has been the capital of the whole of China. Not only was it the site of the central government which promulgated laws binding upon the whole nation and commanded respect and obedience from its officials as well as its subjects, but it was also that of the national treasury which received regularly from time to time from the various provinces revenues in the forms of silver, grain, silk and other kinds of wealth. In the days of the Manchus, it was this revenue, which supported the lavishing imperial court, fed thousands of its kinsmen and bannerman soldiers who exerted no energy whatsoever on their part in return, and lastly paid the salaries of thousands of mandarins to enable them to maintain their living as became their standing, according to the scale then prevailing. In those days, when modern industry and commerce were still in their infancy, Peking could quite properly boast of itself as being the most opulent city in China, as it was able to draw every year immeasurable quantities of national wealth to support its big population of Manchu idlers and easy-going functionaries. Like the capital of all oriental countries, Peking owed its splendour to the fact that the ruling dynasty made it its political capital, while numberless functionaries chose it as their place of residence.

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361 In the light of history, therefore, Peking is without doubt the
●362 first city in China. Of all cities, it may easily claim to possess the greatest number of solid and well-built residences, not to mention its magnificent palaces and temples. It is evident that time must have worn out many a building that was once intact and erect and doubtless that in many quarters, where communication with the outside world is difficult, there usually stand houses that have already been on their way to ruin and decrepitude. Yet, on the whole, it must be admitted that Peking houses have a dignity of their own, which can hardly be found in any other city in this land. In comparison with the dwarf huts, low and ugly and made of mud, which one finds in the country sides, they are generally built of bricks with tiled roofs and spacious courtyards. In recent years, through the influx of people into Peking due to its various attractions, there has appeared indeed a shortage of housing, for the rent has gone up and poorer families have been compelled to move either to more distant quarters or to more shabby houses. Consequently, enterprising people rose to the occasion and began to build in outlying or dingy districts long rows of tenements for the occupation of the working class families. These houses are of course small and of very frail construction, but if they are all let, they would yield a rack-rent that goes to swell the pockets of the landlords. This, however, is a new development in Peking—an inevitable one in any city in view of its growth and expansion, unless there exists an enlightened municipal authority to take the matter in hand which we shall not go into now.

342 The Peking house of the regular type is built in four rows
362 encircling a courtyard. As a rule, each row is a separate build-
592 ing consisting of three rooms or *chien*,[1] the centre room or *chien* being used as a hall with a door, while the main entrance of the house is opened in the row that borders on the street. In the courtyard is usually planted a tree, a date-palm or a willow, its green foliage in the summer furnishing a haven to those who want to seek some shade under the blazing sun. A middle-class

[1] A *chien* is usually an enclosure of 2.5 x 3.0 metres.

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342 family usually occupies an entire house of this kind. It is, how-
362 ever, often found that one house may be shared by two or three
592 families, if they happen to have fewer members and do not care to maintain an establishment that is more than they can use. If the middle-class family sometimes finds it difficult to maintain a house of the above description, as it would require heavy expenses for its rent and upkeep, surely families with smaller incomes must be satisfied with as few rooms as they are able to pay for. With our working families, however, the condition becomes even worse, for it was found that with only two exceptions, every family which we investigated occupied only one room. As one building usually comprises three rooms in a row, they may, by means of partitions or walls, be turned into three separate rooms to accommodate three families, of course with a door to each. So far, only the house of the regular type has been described and obviously there must be houses that do not entirely conform to this type. But in a treatise like this it would be hardly necessary to discuss in detail types of Peking houses, for, general speaking, all residential houses are built around a courtyard and the variations are limited to only the size and height of the building, the number of rooms in each row, the location of the main entrance, etc. And it is to the conditions of the room that we must now turn our attention.

342 Both the roof and the ceiling are important elements of the
362 room. In particular, it is usually by the roof that we judge whether a room is fit for human habitation or not. Roofs of Peking houses are of three kinds: those built of tiles are considered the best, being more lasting and expensive, while those of lime or mud are considered of an inferior type. Of the rooms inhabited by our forty-eight families, the roofs were distributed as: tiled, 26, lime, 17, and mud, 5. The make of the roof alone, however, does not indicate the habitability of the room, for it must be so built that no water should drip in while it rains or the snow upon it thaws. On this point, it was found that thirty-seven families lived in rooms imperfectly roofed, while the remaining eleven families had their roofs in good condition.

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Obviously, to live under roofs in a dilapidated state means discomfort, especially if rain water leaks through the roof and makes the room including its furnishings entirely wet or soaked with water. It seems that the roofs of the rooms occupied by poorer families are generally in bad shape, since the rental paid by them is low and the landlord is disinclined to lay out money for repair.

The ceiling of the Peking houses is usually made of a framework of reed pasted with wall-paper. In the summer, it shuts out the heat which is absorbed by the roof, while in the winter it keeps the room warm and cosy. But as the paper on the framework usually wears out after a few months, particularly if it has been moistened with water coming through a leaky roof, it requires expense from the occupant every year to keep it in good condition. Therefore, it would not be a surprise to find that forty-one of our families had no ceilings in their rooms.

So much for the roof and the ceiling. Let us now study the space inside the room. The room is usually square in shape. Its size varies, though there are standard measures well-known to the building trade. For the families under investigation, measurements were taken for all the rooms in which they inhabited and it was discovered that their range is as follows:

Length: 2.6-3.7 metres (8-12 Chinese mason's foot-rule).
Width: 2.2-2.9 metres (7-9 Chinese mason's foot-rule).
Height: 2.2-2.9 metres (7-9 Chinese mason's foot-rule).

Of these families, one-fourth lived in rooms of $3.2 \times 2.6 \times 2.2$ metres, which is equivalent to 18 cubic metres. For the average of all rooms, the capacity per room amounts to 20 cubic metres.

In this connection, it is interesting to note that the rooms in which the Peking working families live are of much smaller size that those in Japan. According to Morimoto,[1] the size of the rooms occupied by families of smaller incomes in small and large cities in Japan ranges from 76 to 110 sq. ft. and from 68 to 108 sq. ft. respectively. With our Peking families, however, the

[1] Morimoto, Op. cit., pp. 117, 119.

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362 room of the biggest size is measured only 100 sq. ft. while that of the smallest size only approximates 40 sq. ft., the average size for all the rooms being 66 sq. ft. From a comparative point of view, it appears that the rooms the poorer families occupy in Peking are far too small, but it should be remembered that the bigger size of the old-styled Japanese room is reduced by its low ceiling and the smallness of the Peking room is compensated by its more elevated roof.

Nevertheless, the average room in a Peking house is still far from being sufficient, for practically half of the ground area in the room is taken up by a *kang*, a brick-built loft of more than half a metre high. As a substitute for the bed, the *kang* can be found practically in every house in north China. It is so built that it can be heated in the winter time by means of a Peking stove or by burning fuel such as wood or straw under it. It is without doubt an economical device in the Chinese home equipment, for, unlike the bedstead made of wood or iron, it may last many a year with very little wear and tear and requires but a reasonable sum for construction. It is usually built at the same time as the house and the landlord does not charge anything for the provision of it. Indeed, in those parts of China where the climate in the winter is particularly severe, a well-heated *kang* is the most welcome place to the tired labourer where he may enjoy his sleep, warm and cosy. Yet, it has also its distinct shortcoming: it is immovable and, being a mass of bricks, occupies too much space in the room. In case the room is equipped with other furniture, the air space in it must be still more reduced. Fortunately, the window of the room is unusually large. It is opened on the same side of the wall as the door and it occupies more than two-thirds of the former. Two or more pieces of latticed work constitute the window, which is generally pasted with thin white paper, the glass window being considered a luxury by poor families. Yet, it should be remarked that while paper permits better ventilation in the room, the transparent glass would certainly provide better light.

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In view of the limited space in the room, any one, not acquainted with the living conditions of the families studied, would be curious to know how they could possibly work and live there. The *kang* is not only a bed to sleep on, but serves also as a sitting place or a working table as occasion requires. In the summer time, the inmates of the house might work or even sleep in the courtyard, while in the winter time they certainly find no discomfort to huddle together, in order to get warmth. Even cooking does not present any difficulty to them, for the small stove can be installed in the room, if it is winter time, both for cooking food and generating heat, while in the summer, the simple cooking operations can be done in the courtyard. And it is fortunate for the Peking people, at least in this respect, that there are comparatively few rainy days throughout the warm seasons.

Table 17.—Average Number of Equivalent Adults Per Room and Average Amount Paid for Rent in 6 Months, by Income Groups.

Income group	Number of families	Average number of persons living in home per family		Average number of rooms per family	Average number of persons per room		Average rent in 6 months		
		Persons	equivalent Adults		Persons	equivalent Adults	Per family	Per person living in home	Per equivalent adult living in home
Under $ 70	3	3.67	2.60	1.00	3.67	2.60	$8.00	$2.18	$3.08
$ 70 and under $110...	28	4.04	2.86	1.00	4.04	2.86	7.59	1.88	2.65
$110 and under $150...	14	4.93	3.70	1.14 §	4.31	3.23	7.81	1.59	2.11
$150 and under $190...	3	5.00	3.90	1.00	5.00	3.90	6.80	1.36	1.74
All incomes	48	4.33	3.16	1.04	4.16	3.04	7.63	1.76	2.43

§ Of this group, two families occupied two rooms each.

Such being the general conditions of the room in Peking, we shall now proceed to study the housing conditions of our forty-eight families. To have separate rooms for work, sleep and receiving guests is only an extravagance of the well-to-do, while the working class people have to content themselves with one

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room for a variety of purposes. And even that, it is a piece of luck to have. Thus, it will be seen from Table 17 that of all the families investigated, but two were living in one room. There were on the average 3.04 equivalent adults living and sleeping in one room. It is, however, noteworthy that families of smaller incomes appeared to have fewer persons in a room, while in the family of the highest income group, 3.9 equivalent adults should have all slept in one room. The general tendency seems to suggest that the increase of the average number of equivalent adults living in one room corresponds with the rise of income. In other words, the higher the income of the family, the more persons in it live together in one room.

In seeking an explanation of this rather peculiar phenomenon, one has only to study the average amount of rentals paid by our families. The average rental per family of the four income groups ranged itself between $6.80 and $8.00 for six months. But the remarkable thing is that the amount of the rental paid and the income of the family do not correspond with each other. Although the families of higher incomes have more members sleeping in the home, yet they seemed to prefer overcrowding themselves in one room to renting an extra one by spending a little more money. There is no doubt that families of higher income groups suffer from overcrowding, although their comparatively higher economic standing enabled them to spend more on food. This confirms our contention in an earlier chapter[1] that the higher incomes received by some of our families were not due so much to the rise in the rate of their wages as to the greater number of their family members earning money to contribute to the family chest.

The housing conditions of our families can hardly be called satisfactory. Whether judged by the English official standard which allows one person to a room or by the stricter standard employed by Dr. Bowley in "Livelihood and Poverty"[2] which considers more than one equivalent adult to a room as overcrowding, all our families were no doubt too far overcrowded. For

[1] See Chap. V. pp. 67-70.
[2] A. L. Bowley and A. R. Burnett-Hurst, *Livelihood and Poverty* London 1915.

5: Tao E-5 (1926-1927) 1928 AF12 North China AF12

there were on the average 3.04 equivalent adults to a room. While it would require a separate housing survey before we are able to say definitely whether the families of the class studied all live in overcrowded rooms or not, yet so far as the small amount of evidence disclosed by our present inquiry as well as our personal knowledge of the poor class of families in Peking furnish us any ground for generalization, we feel we can state that for a family of three adults with an income of less than 30 dollars per month, to have one adult to a room is an impossibility. It may be added that housing in Peking by no means represents the worst type in this country and this is to be found in the big cities, like Shanghai, Tientsin etc., where congestion of the worst possible kind obtains. If rapid development of industry and commerce in the cities forces up the cost of land and buildings and consequently house rentals on the one hand and there lacks an enlightened municipal authority to plan the housing of workers or to devise easy transportation facilities for them on the other, overcrowding and slum life are bound to happen. And there is no doubt that overcrowding can never be obliterated in Peking, unless measures are taken by the municipal authorities' to cope with the changing conditions of the city.

HOUSEHOLD EQUIPMENT

To complete the description of the housing conditions of our families, it is worthwhile to study the contents of the room and to make an enumeration of the articles owned by them. When the budget study of the working families was concluded in March, 1927, inventories of all the articles in their possession were taken and estimates were then made of the original and the present cost of each article. Evidently it cannot be urged that the inventories are all exhaustive, for allowances must be made for some articles that escaped the notice of either the informant or the investigator and consequently failed to appear on the lists, nor are the estimates entirely faultless. Nevertheless, they may be considered on the whole accurate and fairly representative of the class of families under investigation.

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875 teachers' families. It has been maintained by us that these
262 articles are generally taken in order to stimulate appetite and serve as substitutes for delicacies. It is possible that the diet of the teacher was not sufficiently savory so that foods with a strong smell and an acrid taste were required to add to its palatability. It is, however, also possible that the consumption of such pungent and odoriferous food-stuffs was due to the fact that they have become accustomed to take them regularly, as many of the northern Chinese are. In the latter case, the consumption is then determined by their food habits, rather than by necessity in food economy.

875 Housing. Only the housing conditions of ten teachers' fami-
362 lies will be discussed, as two of them failed to furnish us complete data on housing. Of the ten families, five had three rooms each. There were on the average 5.2 persons or 4 equivalent adults in each family. Calculated according to the average number of persons per room, it will be seen in Table 31 that in each room there lived 1.3 persons or one equivalent

Table 31.—Average Number of Equivalent Adults Per Room and Average Amount Paid for Rent in One Month

No. of rooms	No. of families	Average no. of persons per family		Average no. of persons per room		Average amount of rent in one month		
		Persons	Equi. adults	Persons	Equi. adults	Per family	Per persons	Per equi. adult
1 ..	1	2.0	1.8	2.0	1.8	$2.00	$1.00	$1.11
2...	1	3.0	2.8	1.5	1.4	4.00	1.33	1.43
3...	5	4.8	3.6	1.6	1.2	5.20	1.08	1.44
5 ..	2	5.5	4.6	1.1	.9	7.50	1.36	1.63
11...	1	12.0	8.1	1.1	.7	13.00	1.08	1.60
Total...	10	5.2	4.0	1.3	1.0	6.00	1.15	1.50

adult. The average amount of rent per family was $6.00 a month.

It is evident that the housing of the teacher's families compared favourably with that of the Peking workers. As they had on the average one equivalent adult per room, they were certainly

5: Tao E-5 (1926-1927) 1928 AF12 North China AF12

not living in an overcrowded condition. It should, however, be added that our study of housing was merely to take the rooms without giving any consideration to their respective uses. Every room was counted as one, whether it be the bed-room, the kitchen, or the lavatory. It is possible that this way of counting the rooms, originally used for measuring the housing conditions of the workers and determining their state of overcrowding, is inadequate in a study of the housing of teachers' families. For instance, it may be urged that what is considered a fair standard of housing for the worker is too low for the teacher.

Our inquiry of the living conditions of the elementary school teachers' families revealed no doubt a decided advance from those of the working families. The food cost of the former per equivalent adult per month was $4.70 as against the latter's 3.60. The general living expenses of the former per equivalent adult per month was $12.00 as against the latter's $5.00. All this demonstrates clearly the superior position of the teacher in the general scale of living. But it should be remembered that our calculation was based on the assumption that he is paid regularly and in full each month. In point of fact, however, the precarious conditions of life, as he has found himself in these recent years when educational expenditure was constantly withheld by the government, must have reduced his living to a state hardly any better than that of the Peking worker. If some of the workers could live on "the minimum of subsistence level" which "allows little or nothing for the needs of men as social creatures," the elementary school teacher can hardly be considered to have advanced much towards "the minimum of health and comfort level" which provides "not only for the material needs of food, shelter and body covering but also for certain comforts such as clothing sufficient for bodily comfort and to maintain the wearer's instinct of self-respect and decency, some insurance against the more important misfortunes—death, disability and fire — good education for the children, some

ECONOMY

Although we could not obtain the value of the 427
rented houses, it was possible to find the amount of rent paid by the tenants, most of whom are paying a rent of less than $1.00 for the month. The average rent paid is 72 cents for the month or $8.64 for the year.

TABLE XXXIII. DISTRIBUTION OF RENT

AMOUNT (¢)	NO. OF CASES	PERCENTAGE
No rent	13	7.5
Under 10	1	0.6
10 - 19	22	12.7
20 - 29	46	26.6
30 - 39	13	7.5
40 - 49	9	5.2
50 - 59	17	9.8
60 - 99	13	7.5
$1.00 - $1.49	18	10.4
$1.50 - $1.99	5	2.9
$2.00 -	16	9.3
Total	173	100.0
Unknown	1	

Turning our attention from the financial aspect 362
of the housing problem to the physical aspect we find that the average number of rooms per family is 3.94.

6:Young et. al. E-5 (1928-1929) 1930 AF12 North China AF12

362 If we divide this average number of rooms by the average numaer of persons per family we find that the per capita number of rooms is only 0.8. The distribution of rooms among the families is as follows :—

TABLE XXXIV. NUMBER OF ROOMS PER FAMILY

NO. OF ROOMS	NO. OF CASES	°/₀
1	92	25 6
2	64	17.8
3	87	24.2
4	24	6.7
5	27	7.5
6	11	3.1
7	10	2.8
8	10	2.8
9	7	1.9
10	4	1.1
11 - 15	14	3.9
16 - 20	5	1.4
21 -	5	1.4
Total	360	100.0
Unknown	11	

7: Gamble S-5 (1926-1927) 1933 AF12 North China AF12

VII

HOUSING AND RENT

THE typical Chinese-style house in Peiping is a series of one-story rooms built around the four sides of a courtyard. A family of moderate means usually occupies an entire courtyard. Well-to-do families use several courtyards, ordinarily located one behind the other. In such a house, the servants' quarters are usually in the front courtyard and the family's living rooms in the one farthest from the gateway opening on the street. Poorer families can afford only one or two rooms, so several families live in the same courtyard. One court in the South City is known in the district as the Eight Poor Family Courtyard.

The better-class houses are usually built of grey brick and are roofed with tile. A cheaper type of wall is made of adobe brick faced with a mixture of earth and lime. The roofs of the cheaper houses are made of an earth and lime mixture, or sometimes simply of packed mud. When these become old, they are apt to leak during the summer rainy season.

Light and air for the rooms ordinarily come only from the courtyard, few houses having any windows in the back walls. The upper two-thirds of the front wall is usually wooden latticework, covered with white paper, or white paper with a pane of glass set into the lower part

7: Gamble S-5 (1926-1927) 1933 AF12 North China AF12

vance. Although it is not shown in the accounts, it seems 427
fairly safe to assume that the landlord gave the fractional amounts to his servants as one of their perquisites, and to pay for any work they had done in preparing the house for the new tenant.

When asking a Chinese family how large their house 804
is, one does not ask them how many rooms they have, but 362
how many *chien*. A *chien* is ordinarily the space between two roof trusses. It is not an absolute unit, but varies in size from seven by eight, to nine by twelve feet. The average is probably about eight by eight, or eight by nine, feet. A large room would count as several *chien* and a small one sometimes as only one-half a *chien*, but for our families the number of *chien* and the number of rooms was probably so nearly the same that we have used the terms interchangeably.

One hundred and twenty-four families, 44 per cent, 362
were living in one room; 53 in two rooms; and 34 in three rooms.

Only three of the 30 families with incomes of less than $15 a month had more than one room, and none had more than two. Of the 116 families with incomes of less than $25 a month, only three had more than two rooms. No family had four rooms until the income was more than $35 a month, and no family had five rooms until the income was over $60 a month. One family in the $50 group was living in one room; and it was not until the income was more than $60 a month that all the families had at least two rooms; and not until the income was more than $100 a month that they all had four rooms. Six families had houses with ten or more *chien*. One of these was in the $60 group. The others all had incomes

7: Gamble S-5 (1926-1927) 1933 AF12 North China AF12

●362 of more than $150 a month. The largest house was one of 28 *chien,* occupied by a family of 24 persons. Its rent value was given as $96 a month.

The 283 families lived in a total of 808 *chien,* an average of 2.9 *chien* per family. For the different income groups, the average gradually increased as the income increased. It was less than two *chien* per family, for all the groups with incomes of less than $35 a month. It was over four *chien* per family, for the groups with incomes of more than $60 a month; over five *chien* for those with more than $90 a month; and seven, or more, for those with more than $150 a month. The averages for the families with incomes between $175 and $200 a month, and over $300 a month, were 7 and 7.3. These figures were less than the averages for the $150 and the $200 income groups, but the latter were raised to 10 and 10.4 by two unusually large houses with 21 and 28 *chien.* (Table 28.)

Figure 18 shows how rapidly the average number of rooms increased, as the family income rose from $25 to $175 a month. Judging from the shape of the curve beyond that point, there seems to be a tendency in the higher income groups for the average number of rooms per family to be about the same.

In four families, there were seven persons living in one room; and 37 families had five or more persons per room. It is not difficult to imagine some of the complications that must arise when five or more people of various ages live in one small room. All these families had incomes between $10 and $40 a month. The four families with seven persons per room had incomes between $15 and $25 a month. One hundred and twenty-one families, 43

7: Gamble S-5 (1926-1927) 1933 AF12 North China AF12

per cent, had less than two persons to a room; and 43 362 families had more rooms than people. For the 116 families with incomes of less than $25 a month, the average number of persons per *chien* was 3.3. It was not until the family income was more than $50 a month that all the

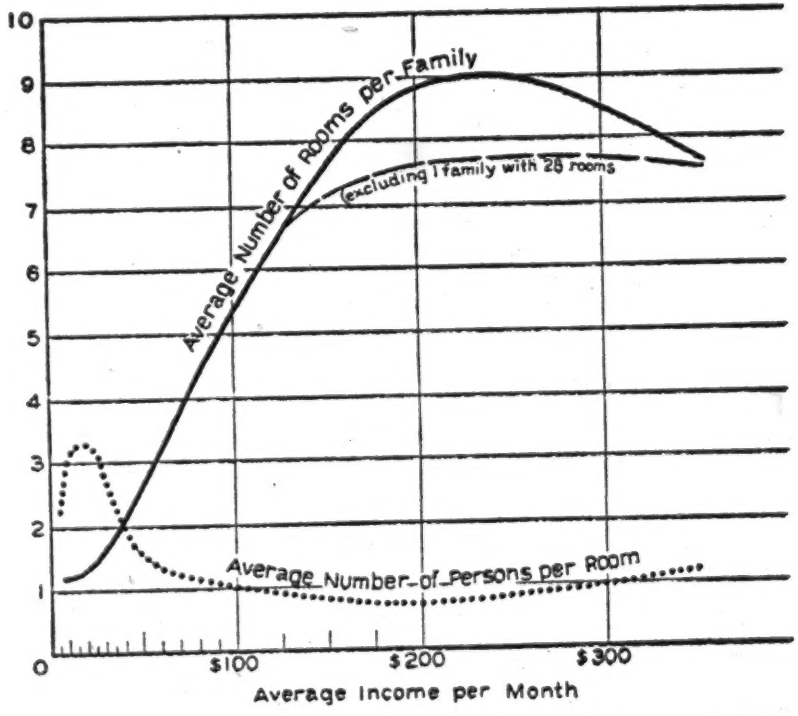

FIGURE 18—Housing: Rooms per Family and Persons per Room.

families had less than three persons to a room; and more than $90 a month, before they all had less than two persons per *chien*. Although there were two families in the $25 group with an average of less than one person per *chien*, it was not until the income was over $40 per month that any considerable proportion of the families had more rooms than persons.

7: Gamble S-5 (1926-1927) 1933 AF12 North China AF12

362 From the averages for the different income groups, it seems evident that in Peiping the average number of persons per *chien* is over three, but less than four, for families with incomes of less than $25 a month; between two and three, for families with incomes between $25 and $40 a month; and between one and two, for families whose incomes are between $40 and $100 a month. For families receiving more than $100 a month, the average is slightly less than one person per *chien*. Figure 18 shows how the average decreased rapidly, as the family income rose from $25 to $50 a month; more slowly as it increased from $50 to $100; and very little as the income went beyond $100 a month. It is to be specially noted, however, that there was a considerable increase in the average number of persons per *chien* as the family income increased from $5 to $25 a month. The averages for the four income groups were 2.3, 3.2, 3.4 and 3.7. The average number of persons per family increased from 3 to 4.7, but the average number of *chien* per family only from 1.1 to 1.3. The rent of an extra room was such a considerable item that these low-income families could not well undertake it without a considerable increase in their income. Only 16 per cent of the families with incomes of less than $25 a month had more than one room. It will be recalled that Figure 4, page 21, showed there was a definite trend for the size of the family to increase as the income increased; also that Figure 9, page 49, showed the average amount spent for food to be less than $3.70 per cost consumption unit per month until the family income was over $25 a month. In the low-income families, so large a part of any increase in income had to be used for food, that it was not possible to relieve crowding by renting additional space. This

7: Gamble S-5 (1926-1927) 1933 AF12 North China AF12

same increase in the number of persons per room was found by Dr. T'ao in his study of 48 Peiping families, all of whom had incomes of less than $31 a month. The average number of persons per room increased from 3.7 to 5 as the family income increased from less than $11.65 to more than $25 a month.[2] These averages are decidedly higher than ours. Furthermore, when the income of our families was more than $25 a month, the number of persons per *chien* began to decrease. Difference in sampling seems to be the explanation of the differences in the averages.

The total rent bill for the year for the 283 families was $22,195.30. This was an average of $78.85 per family per year, or $6.55 per month. The annual rent paid by any one family varied from $5.10 to $317. The rent value of the houses owned, or occupied rent-free, ranged from $9.50 to $1,152 per year. Twenty-two families paid less than $12 a year, or $1 a month, for rent, while 25 families paid more than $100 a year. Thirty-two families occupied houses with a rent value of more than $100 a year.

The families with incomes of less than $10 a month paid, on the average, $1.05 a month for rent. The average rent increased as the family income increased, but it was less than $2 a month for all the income groups below $25 a month. It was over $5 a month for all the groups with incomes of more than $40; more than $10 a month when the family income was over $80; and over $30 for the families with incomes of more than $200 a month. The average for the $150 group was $30.95. This was a high average, as one family was given the use of a ten-

[2] No. 39.

8: Lin E-5 (1927)1928 AF12 North China AF12

CHAPTER III

WELFARE WORK OF THE CHIU TA SALT REFINERY

I. THE LIVING QUARTER OF THE WORKERS

362 466 When the Chiu Ta Factory was first established, a few houses were reserved for workers to live in, free of charge. As the number of workers increased, a regular dormitory was built in 1924, in which 40 rooms were available for their use. The arrangement in all the rooms is more or less similar. Each room accommodates 12 persons and is furnished with chiffonier a board table, chairs and even tea sets. The men are free to choose their own room mates, so that acquaintances and friends may feel at home in living together and the management of the dormitory was thereby greatly facilitated.

The dormitory is managed on a self-governing plan by the workers, though the factory authorities reserve to themselves the right to supervise its management. Regulations governing the dormitory were, of course, drawn up by the factory.

The dormitory rooms are inspected by the authorities once in the morning for cleanliness and once in the evening in order to see whether all have turned in and are well-behaving. For the management of the dormitory, there are elected among the workers in each room two men whose duties are to supervise the conduct of their room mates, enforce the rules regarding discipline and cleanliness and report things of consequence to the managerial department. Each one in the room is, in turn, responsible for one day to clean it.

362 356 466 Cleanliness is classified by the factory authorities into five grades and after the daily inspection, each room is marked with a certain grade. At the end of every month, reward both in money and in kind are given to members of those rooms which have received high grading, while fines are imposed on those

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who fail to observe the rules of order and cleanliness. The rewards vary from one to five dollars, while the fines, only from 5 to 30 cents. The fines are not collected by the factory but are reserved for buying, at a later date, things that are needed in the rooms on which fines have been imposed. This system of rewards and fines is said to have worked quite satisfactorily. And our investigation well supports this view, for during the stay of the investigator in the factory, always he found the rooms well kept.

Workers having families are not provided with free lodging by the factory. As workmen who brought families to Tangku have greatly increased in recent years, the factory bought in 1926 35 rooms which have been let out to them on very reasonable terms. Again, in the summer of 1927, a group of new houses of about 33 rooms was built by the factory for the accommodation of workers' families. Some more new houses, it is said, will be put up with a view to forming in the future a Chiu Ta Community in Tangku. The factory charges only 50 to 80 cents per room as monthly rent which is barely enough for its annual repairing. Such expenses as building a doorway or walls are borne by the factory.

Water Supply.—There has never been any fresh water-supply at Tangku. Fresh water is brought over from a long distance and at a high price. It was the Chiu Ta Factory that first opened two artesian wells and furnished cold and boiled water to its resident workers. In 1927, when the price of fresh water soared up, the use of the well water was also granted to the workers who had families with them. The quantity of water each family may consume is limited according to its size.

Fuel and Light.—The resident workers are provided with electric light and heating, free of charge. Workers having families are denied this benefit, but wood shavings in the factory are distributed to them free. Again, in the east section coal dust is sold to the workers having families at 25 cents per 100 catties, while in the west section it is simply thrown away, so that those who want it may pick the same up.

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CONSULTATION ROOM OF THE HOSPITAL.

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FILING INTO THE DINING ROOM

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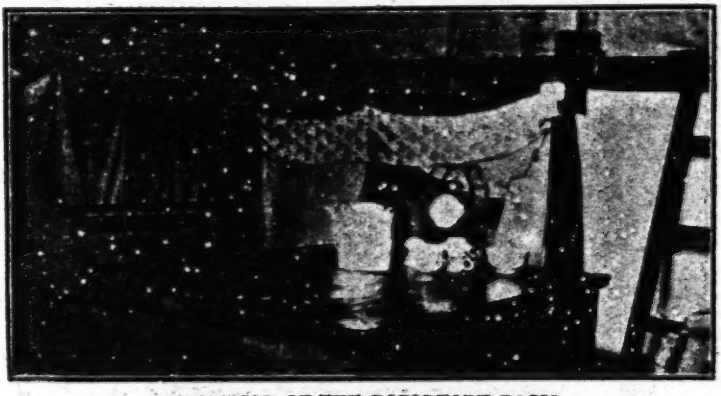

INTERIOR OF THE DORMITORY ROOM

[FACING P. 32]

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511 262 Food expenses include cereals, vegetables, condiments, meats and refreshments. These expenses were obtained first by ascertaining the quantity of each kind of food consumed every month and then multiplying it by its average monthly price. There are six kinds of cereals in common use: white wheat flour, black wheat flour, corn flour, rice, millet, and green beans. For the poor families, black wheat flour and corn flour are the principal cereals, while only workers earning more than $20 a month can afford to eat rice. Appetizers of the poor families consist simply of salted vegetables and shrimp sauce. Meat is seldom taken by the worker's families, except during festivals and new year holidays.

511 427 Rent is the amount paid for occupying the house. Where an occupant is the owner of the house, rent is estimated by valuation. Rent is very low in comparison with all other expenses. Three explanations may be offered for this phenomenon. First, some of these houses were bought by the factory and rented to the workers at an especially low rental. Secondly, in spite of the steady rise of prices in recent years, an old occupant of a house usually enjoyed the privilege of paying rent at the original rate and was not effected by its rise. Besides, some workers lived in the west of Tangku, where rent was usually half of what one should pay for a room in the sections near to the town. Thirdly, the size of these families is small, the average size being only 3.72 persons per family. Thus, a one-room-house would be sufficient to accommodate them all. Even those who had bigger families would prefer to stay in a small house and enjoy less comfort in order to reduce their expenses.

[342] 362 511 427 The worker's houses are generally built of mud with frail framework. Sometimes rooms are built around a courtyard accommodating from five to twenty families. Glass windows and brick floor are but rarely found in such rooms. Except those who lived in their own houses, each of these working familes only occupied one or two rooms. It is shown in Table 36 that the average number of rooms of the 61 families was 1.72 per family, the average number of persons per room was 2.67 persons or 2.05

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Table 36.—Average Number of Persons Per Room and Average Amounts of Rent in One Year by Income Groups.

Income group	Number of families	Average number of persons living in home per family		Average number of rooms per family	Average number of persons per room		Average rent in one year		
		persons	equivalent adult males		persons	equivalent adult males	Per families	Per persons	Per equi. adult males
$130 and under $180	22	3.27	2.37	1.18	2.77	2.00	$ 11.72	$ 3.58	$ 4.93
$180 and under $230	21	3.09	2.31	1.17	2.65	1.98	12.95	4.18	5.60
$230 and under $280	10	3.80	2.77	1.60	2.37	1.73	18.74	4.93	6.76
$280 and under $330	4	5.00	3.58	1.87[1]	2.66	1.90	29.00	5.80	8.11
$330 and under $380	2	6.50	4.20	2.25[1]	2.88	1.86	33.75	5.19	8.03
$380 and under $430	1	6.00	5.10	2.00	3.00	2.55	30.00	5.00	5.88
$430 and under $480	1	6.00	4.40	2.00	3.00	2.20	24.00	4.00	5.45
All incomes	61	4.80	3.51	1.72	2.67	2.03	22.88	4.67	6.39

[1] One family of this group occupied 3 rooms.

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362 equivalent adult males, and the average amount of rent was $22.88
511 a year per family or $4.67 a year per capita. Very few families
427 could afford to live in two-roomed houses. The common way is to rent a one-and-half room house which consists of a kitchenet and a bed room. Sometimes two families may share a three-roomed house with 1½ rooms for each. Thus it is possible to do cooking in one room and sleep in the other. But it is also found that certain families live in one room where a kitchen stove is connected with the *kang*. This is not only uncomfortable but also far from being hygienic, since food is prepared in the bed-room.

511 The clothes the worker and his people wear are generally
291 made of cloth. Imported satin is hardly used except in very few families with high income. Some poor families were found to buy flour bags from the factory and make them into garments.

511 Expenses for fuel and light include those for coal, reeds (a
372 plant used for fuel in North China) oil, and water. Some families picked their own reeds and coal for fuel. The value of fuel for such families was estimated and included both in family income and in the fuel expenses.

511 Miscellaneous expenses are exceptionally high, as they include both ordinary expenses for sanitation, social intercourse, tea and tobacco, furniture, toilet articles, new year entertainments, religion and amusements, and occasional expenses for transportation, education, medicine, marriage and funeral service. Extra charge for marriage and funeral accounted, in most cases, for the swelling of the expenditure figures in the miscellaneous group. For instance, the marriage and funeral expenses of the family in the sixth income group alone amounted to $120 which is much higher than the miscellaneous expenses of any other group.

In Table 38, the income, total expenses and food expenses per family together with the total and food expenses per adult male are classified according to equivalent adult male groups. It may be noted from the Table that income, total expenses and food expenses per family increase with the number of equivalent adult males in family of each group, but food expenses per equi-

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II. WELFARE WORK

466 Welfare work cannot, as yet, be said to be a special feature of the Works, as it is still in its infancy. The few kinds of welfare work that the workers and members on the administrative staff are privileged to enjoy are undertaken jointly with the Chiu Ta Refinery. They are the Workmen's School, the Factory Hospital, the Cooperative Store and the Ming Shin Primary School, all of which have been dealt with in detail in a former chapter.

466 Dormitory.—At the time of our investigation, the Pacific
362 workers were living in four temporary residences pending the construction of a regular dormitory.

There were six rooms in Residence A, a part of the Chiu Ta dormitory, accomodating 72 men. The arrangement and discipline in this residence were all copied from the Chiu Ta Dormitory, but as there was no daily inspection, the place was not neatly kept up. Residence B was an inn of 20 rooms in which lived 120 men, mostly skilled workers. The residence seemed to be rather overcrowded, for the size of the rooms could hardly allow six or seven persons to live in each. About thirty workers, mostly assistants and store room keepers, lived in Residence C, a mud house of 10 rooms. Two rooms were used for cooking and for meals. The place was managed by the workers alone. It was found that a remarkable degree of cleanliness, much higher than in the other residences, had been attained here. Not only the courtyard was spacious and the roofs were high, but chairs and tables were provided for those who might like to read and write letters. Residence D consisting of 8 rooms accommodated 80 persons. Large windows permitted the rooms to be flooded with light, but the ceiling was rather too low.

It has been observed that conditions of the four residences differ from one another. If two of them seem to be fairly satisfactory, the other two leave much to be desired. It seems impossible for the factory authorities to enforce rules of sanitation and discipline in all the residences, as they were widely scattered, and to do so would entail extra services and extra men

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on the part of the factory. It is hoped that when the new dormitory is completed, the workers might find a better environment to live in.

Food, Fuel and Light.—As far as possible, every facility is accorded by the factory to its workers, in order to make their living comfortable. A few of these facilities may now be mentioned. There is an artesian well drilled by the factory and fresh water from the well is distributed free to the various residential quarters of the workers. Stoves and coal that are needed in the worker's quarters in the winter are also provided by the factory. For meals, workers have the option of using the dining room of the Chiu Ta dormitory or doing their own cooking. In the former case tickets for buying meals are advanced to the workers, the value of which is deducted from their pay at the end of the month. In the latter case, stoves, coal and other cooking facilities are furnished. A third alternative adopted by some workers is to form a group whose members agree to have their meals provided by a special cook. In this case, both the cooking service and coal for the fire are provided free by the factory. There were at the time of the investigation two groups of this kind in existence. The one in Residence B consisted of about thirty members, each of whom paid about $6.50 a month for food. The kitchen service was supervised by the workers who served in groups of two by rotation. In Residence C, about twenty workers formed a group and each paid about $5.50 a month for food. A committee composed of the representatives of all the rooms in the residence supervised the kitchen service, but, in fact, the work was delegated to its chairman alone.

Sanitary Conditions.—As the Factory Hospital is a cooperative enterprise of Chiu Ta and the Pacific Alkali Works, workers belonging to the latter are, therefore, accorded the same treatment in the hospital as those of the former. Facilities for hair-cutting and bathing are also afforded the Pacific workers at the Chiu Ta barber shop and bath room. Arrangement has been made by the factory with a bath house in the town where the Pacific workers may take baths at regular intervals, free of charge. The bath is regularly frequented by them.